coffee producing countries including India, since 80% of coffee produced in the country is exported, the industry is mainly dependent on the global coffee prices. Due to low coffee prices prevailing in the international markets, there has been a slight decline in the export of coffee during 2001 -02 as compared to the previous year.

(b) As the notification has been issued very recently, it is too early to assess the actual impact of the same on the small coffee growers.

(c) Does not arise in view of (b) above.

Entry of ONGC in retail sector

*237. SHRI K. RAMA MOHANA RAO: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that ONGC has applied for authorisation to set up retail outlets to sell petrol and diesel in certain States;

(b) if so, the details of the proposal; and

(c) the details of the States in which ONGC propose to set up its outlets?

THE MINISTER OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI RAM NAIK): (a) to (c) government have granted the authorisation to Oil and Natural Gas Corporation (ONGC) for marketing transportation fuels through 600 Retail Outlets, in the first phase, primarily in three States *i.e.* Andhra Pradesh, Gujarat and Maharashtra.

Payment of salary to the employees of NPCC

*238. SHRI GAYA SINGH:
SHRIJ.CHITHARANJAN:

Will the Minister of WATER RESOURCES be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are aware that the employees of various units of NPCC Ltd., have not been paid salary for the last several months; and

(b) if so, whether Government have taken any steps to disburse the arrears of salaries?